

Proposal 26-05

# CALIFORNIA STATEWIDE RURAL INTERCITY BUS STUDY

Technical Proposal

February 3, 2006

Prepared for the  
State of California  
Department of Transportation

In Response to  
RFP Number 64A0166



**KFH**  
◆ GROUP ◆

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## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The KFH Group is pleased to respond to the State of California Department of Transportation's Request for Proposals Number 64A0166, *California Rural Intercity Bus Study*. The KFH Group has extensive experience in performing this exact type of study, and for this effort is being joined by team members Heather Menninger, Judy Norman, and Carol Landsman, who bring their extensive experience in rural California transit programs and issues to the team. In this section of the proposal we will present our Project Manager, provide more information about our project management approach, and present more information about the team members and their experience. Detailed project descriptions for each firm can be found in Appendix A

### **PROJECT MANAGER: Mr. Frederic D. Fravel**

The KFH Group team is proposing Mr. Fred Fravel, KFH Group Vice President, as the Project Manager for the *California Statewide Rural Intercity Bus Study*. Mr. Fravel has extensive experience in the performing transit planning projects that address the particular focus of the proposed California study, as he has performed statewide and regional intercity bus plans in Colorado, Georgia (twice), Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, as well as performing policy studies on this and related topics for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Congressional agencies, and industry associations. In addition, he has extensive experience in projects addressing rural public transportation, including management of more than 50 local rural and small urban short-range public transportation plans, and a number of studies addressing state policies and programs addressing rural transportation issues. His resume is included in the Personnel Section, but we wish to highlight his most relevant experience here.

### **Statewide Intercity Bus Plans**

Currently Mr. Fravel is the Project Manager for the KFH Group team on the *Washington State Intercity and Rural-to-Urban Public Transportation Network Plan* for the Washington State Department of Transportation. The goal is to develop a state plan that will be used as a basis for funding intercity projects, including rural feeder services. The development of policies supportive of the identification of a basic state network and a program to maintain and support it are also a major aspect of the study. The study is not limited to the traditional intercity bus services, but is also focusing broadly on the services offered (or potentially provided) by rural public transit operators and other private providers such as the airport ground transportation industry—a major focus is developing a connected network and an information system to make the public aware of these mobility opportunities. Previous statewide intercity bus studies directed

by Mr. Fravel have included projects in Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, and Virginia.

### **Corridor or Regional Intercity Bus Plans**

A number of state DOT's have sought assistance regarding rural intercity bus issues in a particular corridor or region of the state, often as a result of a service abandonment or in response to a local request for assistance. KFH Group, under the direction of Mr. Fravel, has extensive experience in performing these types of studies as well—Mr. Fravel has directed such projects in Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Virginia. These projects typically involve more in-depth analysis of local needs for regional and intercity connections, close collaboration with rural transit providers, development of service options, demand estimation, and development of project proposals.

### **National Research and Policy Studies**

The KFH Group, under the direction of Mr. Fravel, has also been extensively involved in the ongoing discussion of rural intercity bus issues at the national level. He was the principal investigator on the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) project *Effective Approaches to Meeting Rural Intercity Bus Transportation Needs* (available as TCRP Report 79) to identify, analyze, and describe potential methods of meeting needs for transportation from rural areas to larger towns and the national transportation network. The study included surveys of all state transportation departments, and all regular-route intercity carriers, and the development of case studies from fifty individual projects. It provides a guide book for state DOT's covering the entire range of potential strategies to maintain or improve rural intercity bus service.

More recently, he assisted the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of the Secretary in the development of their report to Congress on *Declining Intercity Bus Service*. In December 2004, Congress responded to recent major cutbacks in intercity bus service by calling on DOT to conduct a study and make recommendations. Mr. Fravel consulted with the DOT to assist them in performing this study.

Previously, the KFH Group was also extensively involved in the development of policy regarding accessibility of over-the-road coaches operated by private for-profit firms. Mr. Fravel was the Principal Investigator on TCRP Project J-06-33 *Cost of Meeting Accessibility Requirements for Over-the-Road Buses*, and he was the Project Manager on the consulting work supporting the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment in the study mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), *Access to Over-the-Road Buses for Persons with Disabilities*.

More detailed descriptions of each of these projects are presented in Appendix A.

## **Project Manager's Familiarity with State and Federal Regulations**

As the Principal Investigator for the TCRP 79 study *Effective Approaches to Meeting Rural Intercity Bus Transportation Needs* and the more recent assistance to the U.S. Department of Transportation in its study of *Declining Intercity Bus Service*, he had to be completely familiar with the Section 5311(f) rural intercity bus transportation program, and with other FTA and DOT policies addressing intermodal facilities and private sector participation. With regard to FTA programs, Mr. Fravel is very familiar with their policies, procedures and regulations. He has conducted FTA Triennial Reviews of S. 5307 transit systems in California, and is currently involved in performing Triennial Reviews in Maryland. This work entails knowing the FTA compliance requirements in great detail. He rewrote the S. 5311 State Management Plan for the Georgia DOT, and earlier directed the revision of the State of Maryland's S. 5310 State Management Plan. The many short range local transit planning studies have also required detailed knowledge of FTA and state requirements in order to develop budgets, make capital plans, and develop organizational options. From his work in many states, Mr. Fravel understands that state policies, programs and regulations differ considerably, even with regard to the implementation of the same federal programs. As part of the team for this project, KFH Group has added subconsultants who have additional direct experience working in California on public transit in rural areas, and on coordination issues. They are discussed below in the description of the team.

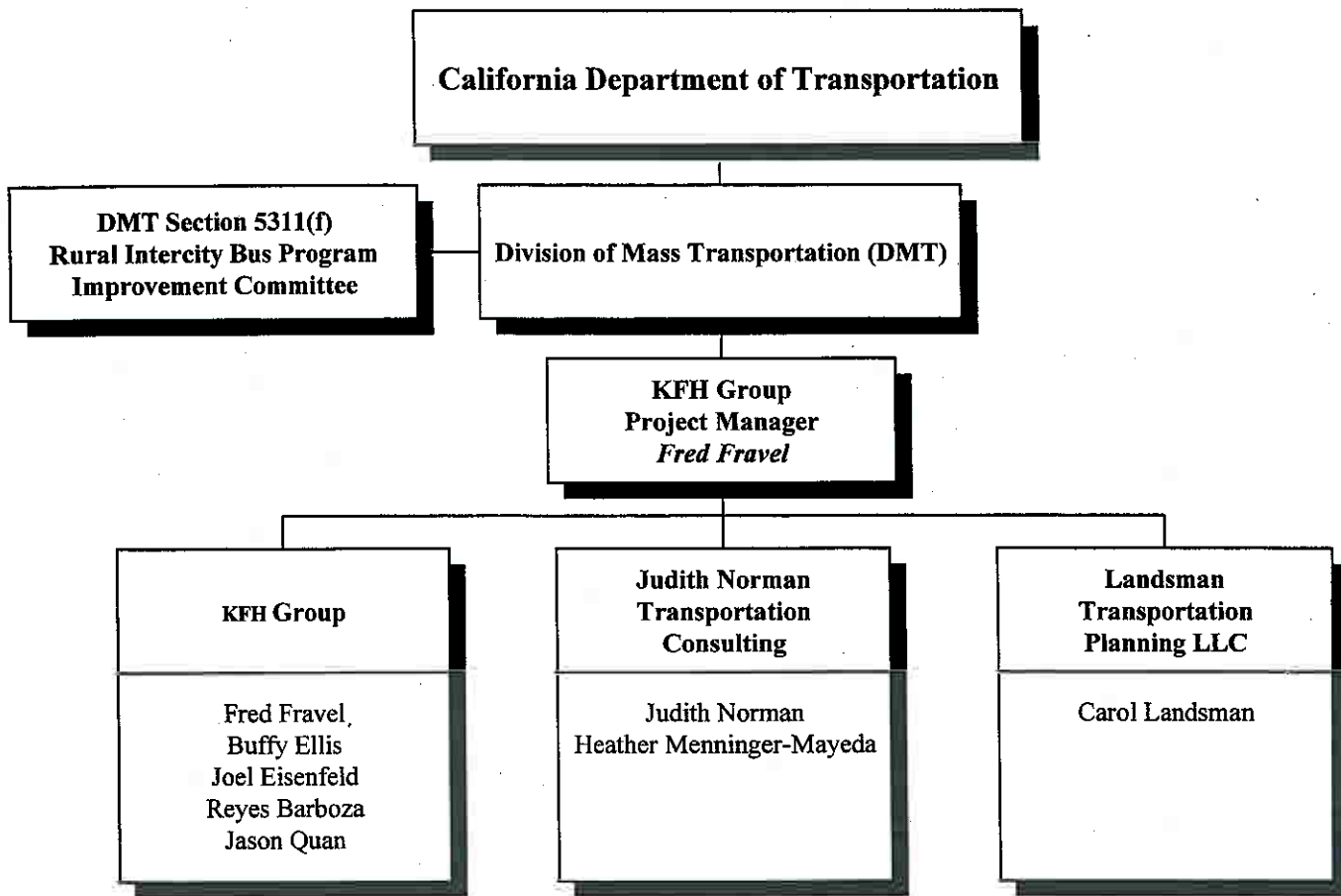
## **THE TEAM**

As indicated above, the KFH team includes the KFH Group, along with subconsultants Heather Menninger, Judy Norman and Carol Landsman. A project organization chart is presented in Figure 1.

## **About the KFH Group**

KFH Group, Inc. is an experienced firm of transportation professionals, dedicated to providing assistance to local, state and federal organizations to improve public transportation services. We focus on transportation planning, management consulting, policy analysis, service evaluation and design, and operational support for transportation programs in communities of all sizes – smaller towns and rural areas, suburban and urbanizing regions, and larger metropolitan environments.

Founded in 1995 with a primary goal of providing high-quality and responsive consulting assistance, the KFH Group built upon the extensive experience of the firm's three Principals and now includes ten professionals plus support staff. Since 1995, we have successfully completed well over 100 consulting engagements, recognizing that each project we undertake must be responsive to client agency issues and objectives, while amalgamating detailed analytical study, reasoned thinking to provide alternative solutions, and well-documented findings and



**Figure 1 – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

recommendations. And all this must be tempered with the realities of the financial and political environment of the project.

Incorporated in the State of Maryland, the KFH Group is certified as a Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE) with the California Department of Transportation as well as the departments of transportation in more than 25 other states.

### **KFH Group Expertise**

Our expertise is multi-faceted and multi-modal, focusing broadly on public transportation though specialized in specific disciplines, including planning, management consulting, policy analysis, service evaluation and design, and operational support. We have worked with transportation services of all types, from large urban bus systems in metropolitan regions, to suburban transit programs grappling with lower density land use issues and abundant parking, to paratransit programs serving the general public or specialized groups such as individuals with disabilities, as well as the very small one- or two-van human service transportation program.

The KFH Group has built its expertise through a wide range of studies, including the following areas of experience:

- ***Intercity bus planning and policy analysis.*** KFH Group has a recognized expertise in the intercity bus industry, including analysis of industry trends, regulatory issues and policy, linkages with rural public transportation, intermodal connectivity, accessibility, and facility and terminal assessment and improvement, through statewide studies, federal research projects, and assistance to private carriers.
- ***Rural, Small Urban and Urban Area Transportation Development Plans (TDPs) and transit service planning.*** For more than 50 urban areas, small cities and rural areas, we have completed TDPs or detailed transit service plans, which have included transit needs analysis, transit service potential, analysis of current services, performance assessment, ridership demand forecasting, development of alternatives, fare analysis, costing of alternatives, preparation of budget forecasts, capital and facility needs assessment and planning, organizational and institutional planning, and implementation plans.
- ***Human service agency and public transportation coordination.*** Our studies in this area have included efforts at both the local and regional level to coordinate services, develop agency services into general public transit, and coordinate agency trips with services open to the general public.

For this project we are highlighting the experience of the KFH Group staff in a wide variety of local, state, and national level intercity bus projects, primarily through the ongoing intercity bus work directed by Fred Fravel. These projects have included policy and planning studies developing and assessing projects proposed to address rural intercity needs. These studies have included both Section 5311(f) programs and state-funded projects. Most of them involve the elements of experience sought by Caltrans for this project; including experience with the private carriers and with the S. 5311(f) program and the requirements faced by the states in implementing this program.

KFH also has extensive experience in assisting states with the development of statewide policies and plans, and in the development of state transit programs. This includes our current work for the Georgia Department of Transportation on the review and revision of all elements of the overall S. 5311 program (directed by Mr. Fravel); in our ongoing work for the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) in the development of state program policy, guidance materials, coordination plans, compliance plans, technical assistance and system and project planning; in our previous work for the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT) developing a statewide transit policy plan, performing short-range transit plans for every provider in the state, and developing statewide funding and performance guidelines.

#### **JUDITH NORMAN-TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING (JNTC)**

JNTC is a sole proprietorship and a minority woman-owned firm established in 1990 that specializes in urban and regional transportation issues. The Principal, **Judith Norman**, has worked in the field of transportation for over 20 years and has extensive experience in Southern California. JNTC Associate Principal, **Heather Menninger-Mayeda** joins her in this effort, bringing 20 years experience as a transit planner with A-M-M-A, and its particular focus on specialized transportation and community-level mobility in rural and suburban settings.

Ms. Norman and Ms. Menninger-Mayeda each have long experience in California transportation planning issues. Projects of specific relevance include two Caltrans studies, both studies of statewide planning significance:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) - Analysis of Public Transportation to Promote Non-Traditional Transit Rider Market Share in California.
- Southern California Association of Governments – Health Access in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties: A Study of Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Needs and Resources – Caltrans 5313 Study of Statewide Significance (2003-2004)

Of additional relevance are the experiences of each principal for regional planning efforts, each of which included extensive data collection and public outreach components:

- Ventura County – Human Service Transportation/ Transit Service Coordination
- San Diego County -- Senior Transportation Business Plan
- Orange County's -- Americans With Disabilities Growth Management Plan
- Western Riverside County -- Measure A Specialized Transportation Strategic Plan
- San Bernardino and Riverside County's Health Access – Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Study of Statewide Significance for the Inland Empire

Selected project descriptions for Judith Norman (JNTC) and Heather Menninger-Mayeda (A-M-M-A) can be found in Appendix A

### **Landsman Transportation Planning, LLC**

Carol Landsman brings the team her experience in rural transportation planning, including rural and small urban areas. Landsman Transportation Planning focuses on transit and paratransit planning, policy development and transportation and parking demand management. Committed to the firm's mission statement: *Progressive Solutions for Strong Communities* she has established a strong reputation for working with stakeholders to develop creative yet realistic strategies to support community goals and visions. For this study she brings particular expertise in needs assessment and stakeholder participation. She also brings the team knowledge of the rural transit environment in rural northern California, including the institutional context of state transit programs. Her work in rural regions has included identification of intercity and inter-regional travel needs, and she has developed appropriate solutions.

Project descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

## **MANAGEMENT**

### **Interacting with the Client**

Once a project begins, the Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day technical contact and liaison with designated technical staff at Caltrans. The Project Manager is also responsible for ensuring that the work is conducted according to the scope of services and that all deliverables are completed in accordance with the specified project schedule. Ongoing project management and administrative responsibilities rest with the Project Manager. This includes liaison with the Caltrans Project Manager and involves the preparation of monthly progress reports, timely attention to any administrative matters, and working with Caltrans to identify and respond to any problems that may arise during the conduct of the various work elements. Preparation of the monthly progress reports will involve a report from the task team staff to the

KFH Group Project Manager, who will then prepare the monthly progress reports. These will include project status, work performed, resources expended, projected activities, and documentation of any problems or difficulties encountered. We anticipate that contact will involve frequent e-mail and telephone exchanges, and not be limited by any means to monthly reports. Depending on schedule and budget, we can and have instituted monthly meetings between the Project Manager and the client in order to keep both apprised of developments.

### **Firm's Quality Acceptance/Quality Control**

In order to provide a high level of quality in the products produced for any project, we have evolved an informal but effective process. In order to maintain an adequate amount of control over the project, we propose that there be a single point of contact between Caltrans and the KFH Group team regarding scope, schedule and deliverables. That point of contact is the KFH Group's designated Project Manager, Fred Fravel.

The process for controlling the quality of documents that are produced for various tasks includes the development of internal preliminary draft materials by technical staff, production of draft materials by office production staff, editing by the Project Manager (and other key team members), revisions, and then provision of a "final" draft document to the client. This gives the client the chance to respond before public or "outside the agency" distribution. The editing process on every technical memorandum and draft report requires each product to be read by the task manager, the office manager, and the contract Project Manager.

### **Budget Monitoring**

At KFH Group each employee is required to submit weekly time sheets showing work time spend by project. These time sheets separate direct and indirect hours, and are signed by the company President. On large projects these hours are tracked by task within project. The Project Manager reviews the weekly time sheet summary for comparison with tasks assigned and anticipated level of effort. In this way adjustments can be made during the course of the month.

Every month the hours by person are converted to the direct labor cost by multiplying the contract rates times the hours spent. Overhead and fee are applied, direct costs (travel, printing, Fedex, etc.) are added, and invoices from subcontractors are included to develop a monthly project cost invoice. Generally we prefer to bill actual monthly costs. This invoice is prepared by the Company President, reviewed with Project Manager, and a final invoice developed. The Project Manager writes the accompanying Monthly Progress report. The review of the invoice is a key budget progress check for the Project Manager.

The firm uses Peachtree accounting software to maintain a General Ledger, Cash Disbursement Journal, Cash Receipts Journal, Payroll, Project Cost Register, and Employee Earnings statement. There are separate direct and indirect accounts for labor and other expenses

in the cash disbursement journal and the general ledger—every expenditure is tracked to a project or to the relevant indirect cost source. Source documents (time sheets, invoices) are entered into the appropriate accounting system module (payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable), which are then linked to job cost and general ledger modules and posted to the appropriate account. Source documents are coded with project numbers and general ledger account numbers. As they are entered into the system, they are automatically distributed to their respective projects and associated general ledger accounts. The cost system labor summary is reconciled with the payroll register and the general register. The firm has internal policies regarding accounting, billing, direct and indirect costs. The Employee Policy and Procedure Manual includes instructions on Time Keeping, Leave, Fringe Benefits, Overtime, Travel/Meals. The firm has an annual audit performed by an independent C.P.A., which includes calculation of overhead.

### **Interacting with the Team**

The transit planning firms on the team have substantial knowledge of each other, and have comparable skills and experience as well as special areas of expertise in service planning, the context, and rural issues in California. The KFH Group staff is all located in the same office, and internal communication between the Project Manager and staff members is accomplished through internal team task meetings, verbal presentations at monthly company staff meetings, face-to-face/in-the-hall consultation, e-mail, and telephone. Typically we work with subconsultants in one of two ways—either integrating them into the overall project, or defining separate tasks that they perform more or less independently, and then integrating their products. For the type of project anticipated in California, we anticipate integrating them into the team, communicating via e-mail, telephone, and in team meetings via conference call.

### **Interacting with Stakeholders**

Contact with stakeholders will take a number of forms. We anticipate that this project will have an advisory committee that includes transit operators, intercity bus operators, advocates, rail program staff, and perhaps others. We have found it useful to set up an e-mail list, and provide draft materials, meeting announcements, minutes, etc. electronically. Typically we provide draft versions of these to the client, make any needed changes, and then send them to all. For this project, we are also anticipating that we will survey all transit operators and intercity providers, and that can be set up to allow written, fax or e-mail replies to encourage response. At the regional level we anticipate interviewing transit and intercity bus operators, and having our primary discussion with stakeholders in regional meetings. We have participated in all these types of meetings, and found all to be potentially useful. Intercity issues are somewhat difficult to address in that the trips are infrequent and the users at any particular time few in number—and it can be difficult to get extensive participation from the private carriers on more than a single advisory committee or a single regional/statewide meeting.

## **PROJECT MANAGER'S ABILITY TO MANAGE SCHEDULE, SCOPE CREEP, BUDGET, AND CHANGES IN THE PROJECT**

The Project Manager, in addition to providing substantive input to the content of a project, must also manage the schedule, make sure the project is following its intended scope, monitor the budget, and react to changes in the project (whatever the source).

### **Schedule Management**

Mr. Fravel's approach to **schedule management** involves the development of a realistic schedule, together with the client at the outset, which is then communicated to all team members. He prefers to develop a list of key meetings and develop tentative dates for those, because it means that intermediate products will be developed to meet those dates, and an audience is expecting them. Schedule slippage is identified as an issue in the monthly progress reports, and if assistance is needed from the client to get back on track, it will be identified (for example if feedback is needed on an intermediate product, or data, etc.). If work originally anticipated for a certain period is taking longer, or is greater than anticipated, we notify clients of these issues and suggest alternatives. Mr. Fravel works with clients to meet their critical schedule needs (a meeting of policy-makers, or a grant application deadline, etc.).

Scope creep is the tendency to expand the work effort beyond that originally agreed upon, often unintentional or done with the best of intentions, but sometimes it is forced by clients who take advantage of a project manager's desire to meet expectations and please the client. Again, a clear scope of work and work plan, developed and jointly reviewed and agreed upon, is a key tool in preventing scope creep. If it occurs, the project manager will recognize cases where work is more than anticipated, or broadening of scope. Mr. Fravel, as project manager, will make the client aware of the potential issue, and then if it is clear that this is beyond the anticipated scope, suggest options: 1) stick to scope, or 2) a revised scope, making clear the resource implications, and suggesting trade-offs (reduced work in another area), or 3) propose addressing the expanded scope, requesting additional resources.

### **Project Budget**

With regard to the **project budget**, Mr. Fravel will utilize the firm's reporting systems which provide weekly tracking of hours by staff by project to monitor staff activity. The monthly invoicing process then assigns costs to hours, adds overhead, adds direct costs, and includes subcontractor costs, resulting in a monthly invoice with project detail, showing amount spent to date, and remainder. This is checked against the project scope, and the anticipated expenditure to that point. Mr. Fravel uses an estimate of cost by task to assess percent complete on task against expenditures. Again, if costs are greater than expected, time sheets are reviewed to make sure the charges are valid, and if so, then reasons for higher-than anticipated costs are determined. Options are then to revise methods to reduce costs, find ways to reduce costs on

remaining tasks, have less expensive persons do the work, reduce direct costs (travel, for example)—or work uncompensated. Mr. Fravel has done all of these.

### **Changes in Scope or Schedule**

**Changes** can arise from developments in the environment, changes in client needs, or changes that are needed because anticipated methods or data sources are not working as planned. We identify the change, attempt to quantify its impact on cost and schedule, develop alternative strategies, and work with the client to meet their needs. Mr. Fravel has addressed requested changes in client needs, and problems arising from lack of data, or poor survey returns. It requires flexibility, and a willingness on both the consultant's and the client's part to achieve the most value from the effort, even if the original path needed to be changed.

## METHODOLOGY

### PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

The State of California, acting through the Division of Mass Transportation (DMT) of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is seeking consulting assistance to perform a study of the rural intercity bus network with the goal of developing recommendations on how best to meet needs for such service now and in the future. The study is to include a review of the current policies and programs, an inventory of the current services that address this need, an evaluation of them, identification of current and future needs, and recommendations on program and policy changes and funding needed to develop a sustainable rural intercity bus system.

### Partnership Potential

Caltrans has identified the development of partnerships as a key element to be considered in developing a sustainable program. One set of current partners is clearly the state's rural public transit operators, who provide local municipal, county and/or regional services in much of rural California. They are already involved in partnering with Caltrans to some extent through participation in the Caltrans S.5311(f) rural intercity bus assistance program—the degree to which they partner among themselves to offer rural intercity services is yet to be evaluated. Another group of potential partners in this effort is the organizations that provide human service transportation—although they may be as much involved as stakeholders who see the need for rural intercity bus service, or could use it, as potential operators. The traditional providers of common carrier intercity bus service in California, largely Greyhound Lines but also including K-T Services, Orange Belt Stages, and Mt. Lassen Motor Transit, Inc., have provided rural intercity bus services without subsidy for decades, and have partnered in the Caltrans S. 5311(f) program in the past—however their role as potential partners is currently undefined as they restructure their services. California is also unique in that the state, together with Amtrak, has created a separate intercity rail network with feeder buses connecting the rail services to smaller cities—this system, including the contracted feeder bus operators, represents another set of potential partners in the development of a statewide network. Finally, Caltrans recognizes that services to and from adjacent states represent another set of potential partnerships.

The idea of developing a state intercity bus plan based on partnerships among these entities has considerable merit in that each currently has or has the potential to provide

substantial assets to a unified, comprehensive statewide network that links rural areas to urban centers, and urban centers to each other. For example, both Greyhound and the Caltrans Amtrak Intercity Rail and Feeder Bus system have substantial investments in terminal facilities and in intercity vehicles. Both function as trunk systems linking urban areas, but also serving small urban and rural places. Yet they are relatively uncoordinated—generally operating as competing systems. The rural intercity services operated by the rural transit providers address local or regional needs, and they may connect with one or both of the intercity trunk networks—but these services are not included in the timetables, web sites or telephone information systems of Greyhound or Amtrak. Passengers from outside the area may never know that they provide access to rural California, and even local riders may not understand that they could get from their rural homes to anywhere if these services connected.

A key challenge in this study is finding out about all the different services offered by the potential partners, mapping routes, checking schedules, fares and information systems—all to begin to understand the resources that the partners could bring to the table. This effort not only needs to consider the routes and services, but also the bus terminals and intermodal facilities that exist, the vehicle fleets involved in providing the services (current status, replacement needs, potential expansion or improvement), and the information and marketing systems that exist—all as potential components of an overall network. Once that inventory has been developed and there is a basic understanding of the potential partners, the focus will shift to the identification of unmet service needs, gaps in service, and needed capital investment—to create a statewide network in both the near- and long-term future.

### Previous Caltrans Rural Intercity Efforts

Caltrans has worked to address rural and urban-to-urban intercity bus needs for many years. In the early 1980's Caltrans staff focused on the intercity bus network in the period surrounding the federal deregulation of intercity bus transportation (the Bus Regulatory Reform Act of 1982 (BRRA)). The immediate result of the BRRA was a significant reduction in rural intercity bus nationwide, and Caltrans focused on these changes in the *California State Intercity Plan, Update* of March 1984. In the absence of significant federal or state funding programs at that time, Caltrans (and the other states) had few tools to address the decline in rural intercity bus service. California intercity bus planning efforts then shifted to the safety monitoring issues of the newly deregulated industry, developing tools for identifying coach and service types for use in safety inspection activities and to monitor bus traffic volumes (the *Bus Classification and Volume Count of Intercity Bus Traffic in California*).

### Section 5311(f)

The national loss of rural service eventually led to the creation of a federal transit program addressing this issue. The Section 18(i) program was included in the 1991 federal transportation reauthorization legislation known as ISTEA, and it became the S. 5311(f) program when the federal transportation legislation was codified several years later. The program requires each state to spend fifteen percent of its annual S. 5311 apportionment for rural and

small urban transit assistance “to carry out a program to develop and support intercity bus transportation” unless the Governor certifies that the intercity bus needs of the state are adequately met. The program defines intercity bus service as regularly scheduled bus service on fixed routes for the general public with limited stops, operating between two or more urban areas “not in close proximity”. Urban area is defined very broadly in this case, with no population threshold—though the overall S. 5311 program is directed at places under 50,000 in population. The definition of intercity service under the program also requires a meaningful connection with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, and commuter service is explicitly excluded from the program. Rural “feeder” services are also eligible, and need not have all the characteristics of the defined intercity service.

S. 5311(f) funding can be provided to public entities, private non-profits, and private for-profit firms, and funding is available for planning, marketing, facility capital, vehicles, operating assistance and coordination of rural services with intercity bus service. The match ratios of the general S. 5311 program apply, with the federal share limited to 50 percent of the net operating deficit for operating assistance, and 80 percent of the cost for capital.

#### **Caltrans Implementation of S. 5311(f)**

The issue of certification by the Governor has been a major issue in many states, because the Governor’s certification of no unmet rural intercity bus needs allows the funding to be used for other S. 5311 projects. However, since this funding source became available, California has only certified once (FY 2003).

With this program to providing both some policy support and funding for rural intercity bus service, Caltrans has implemented the program in several different ways over the years. Greyhound applied for and received funding to operate several long-distance routes in rural areas of the state, providing local operating match. Several of these projects are described as case studies in *TCRP 79, Effective Approaches to Meeting Rural Intercity Bus Transportation Needs* (p.122-3) authored by this study team. However, none of these projects continues to operate. The bulk of the funding as been provided to rural transit operators for rural intercity projects, including the purchase of vehicles, some facility capital, and operating assistance for particular services.

#### **Why This Project is Timely and Important**

Despite the fact that Caltrans has consistently utilized this funding source, an examination of this program and its relationship to other intercity services is timely for a number of reasons. One is the length of time since the last comprehensive look, over 20 years in which there have been many changes in the population, in the bus industry, and in rural transit.

### Increased Funding

A second is the anticipated growth in the S. 5311(f) funding amount as part of the new federal transit reauthorization SAFETEA-LU. The overall rural transit program will increase significantly over the next few years, and therefore the 15 percent set-aside will also grow—anticipated S. 5311(f) allocations for California are:

- FY 2006: \$2,920,134
- FY 2007: \$3,032,947
- FY 2008: \$3,280,373
- FY 2009: \$3,467,326

These levels represent substantial growth in the available program funding, if they can be matched with local funding. Also, this now appears to be a stable, sustainable funding source, one that could be used to support ongoing services rather than focusing on trying to achieve sustainability from the farebox. This study will have a significant role in defining how these funds might best be used to support and develop rural intercity services.

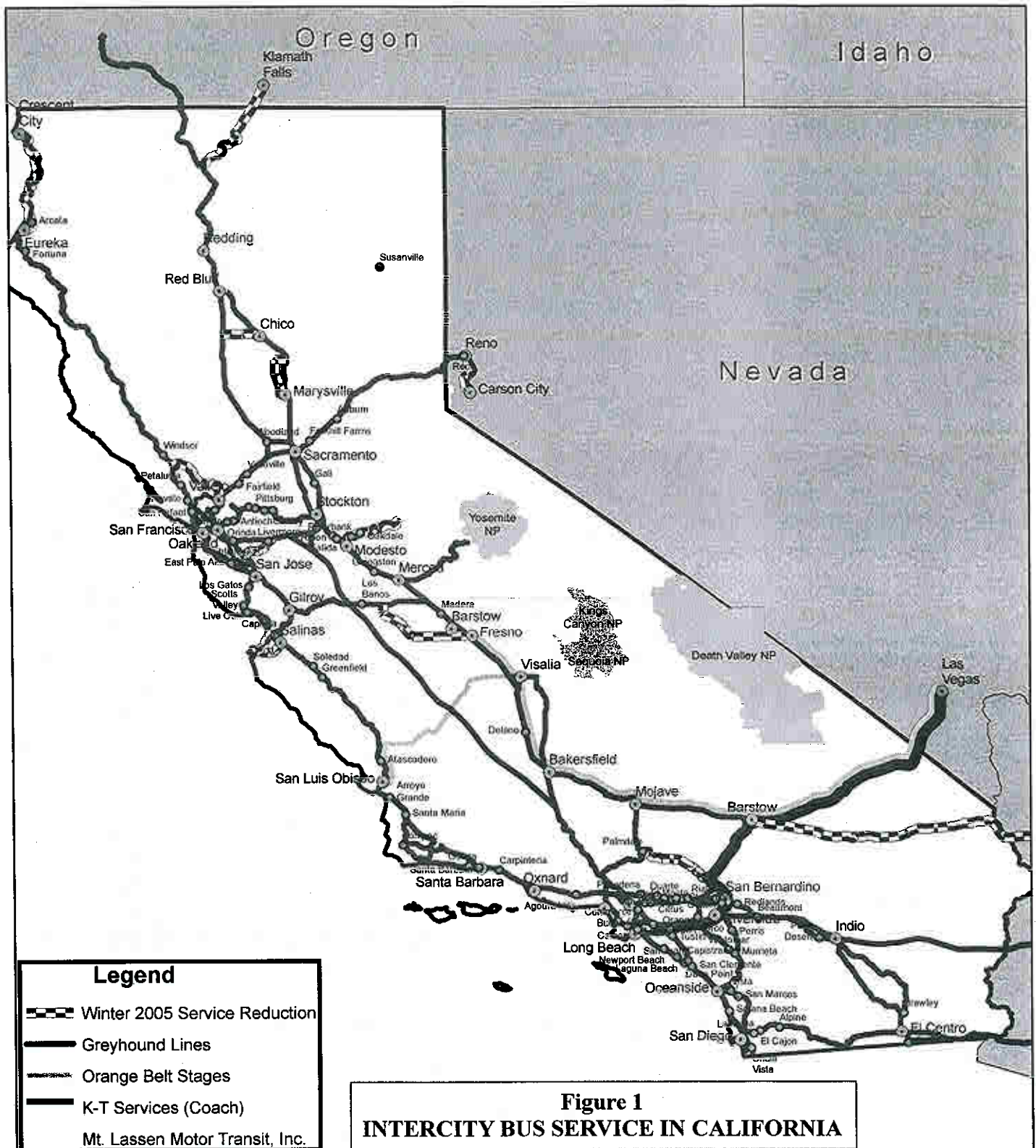
### Consultation Requirements

A third reason to perform this type of study now is the additional requirement in the SAFETEA-LU legislation that states have a consultation process that includes the affected carriers when making decisions on certification. In the past some states have certified that there were no unmet rural intercity needs without having any meaningful dialogue with the carriers that provide the bulk of the service. As California has not generally certified, this is not as much of an issue, but California will have to meet the consultation requirement. By including the private carrier industry in this study as potential partners and participants, California will substantially meet this requirement. The FTA circular update setting forth the regulations implementing this requirement has not yet been drafted, but should become available during the course of the study.

### Greyhound Restructuring

A fourth factor that provides some impetus for this study is the impact of the recent Greyhound restructuring. Following the events of 9/11/01, intercity travel demand dropped, and Greyhound travel was affected. New corporate management focused on improving the overall financial results, in large part by restructuring the route network to drop service where there was minimal ridership, and refocus service on busier corridors with more limited stop schedules. In California this effort began in August of 2004, and overall some 83 locations have lost service.

Figure 1 presents the intercity bus network at the beginning of this process, with the abandoned Greyhound route segments shown as dashed lines. Many of the points losing service were stops on services that now bypass them, but as can be seen some areas lost route coverage as well. Most of the abandoned points are rural points, but some are intermodal connections or commuter-oriented services. Most recently Greyhound announced the end of its Quicklink



commuter service from Sacramento to San Francisco. Greyhound generally indicates that this has made their network stronger, and that the restructuring process in this part of the country is complete. The Greyhound restructuring potentially affects rural California in one other way, and that is their position on S. 5311(f) assistance. As part of the restructuring process Greyhound has been ending its S. 5311(f) services provided under grants or contracts in other states, and it remains to be seen if the firm would respond to any new programs or projects. The firm appears to have continuing interest in participating in intermodal facilities, and in developing arrangements with other carriers (including rural transit providers) to connect with them as a means of continuing to provide rural access. In particular, it is working at the national level to resolve issues faced by rural transit operators seeking Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration registration, required by Greyhound for inclusion in their information systems as interline partners.

### **Caltrans Amtrak Intercity Rail Bus Feeder Network Growth**

Another factor to be considered in this study is the Caltrans Amtrak Intercity Rail and Feeder Bus system. This network has been developed since the last Caltrans study, and it has been the focus of extensive state investment in rail infrastructure, stations, and bus service development. Figure 2 presents a map of this network from the Caltrans website. As can be seen, it operates many bus routes that serve small town and rural California, and it needs to be evaluated in terms of its potential as a partner in the overall state network.

### **Rural Intercity Services Provided by Rural Transit Operators**

Finally, the rural intercity services provided by the rural operators need to be inventoried and considered with regard to whether they are making meaningful connections for service beyond the local, and whether or not there are additional unmet needs for such connections from rural areas. Although the DMT S. 5311(f) application evaluation process awards points for connectivity, an overall focus on the network is needed to understand, depict, and develop these services in a way that provides statewide and national access, rather than just local or regional. A key issue is how to identify these needs, as many of the existing planning processes generally have a local focus, surveys ask questions addressing local or regional transportation needs, and the connection between modes and services is addressed only in limited ways. There is a need to look at these services from a state-level perspective—asking questions about regional and national access—which is another key aspect of this study.

## **STUDY METHODOLOGY**

In order to address these issues the KFH team will address all the tasks called for by Caltrans in its RFP. In the initial task, focusing on the technical aspects of the program, the study team will utilize the extensive experience of the KFH Group with regard to the national rural intercity bus program, other federal programs, other applicable laws and rules to review the California program. KFH experience in working with many states regarding the implementation of these programs has provided us with a great deal of information about potential state issues and regulations, and we will use that experience to help identify state program and regulatory

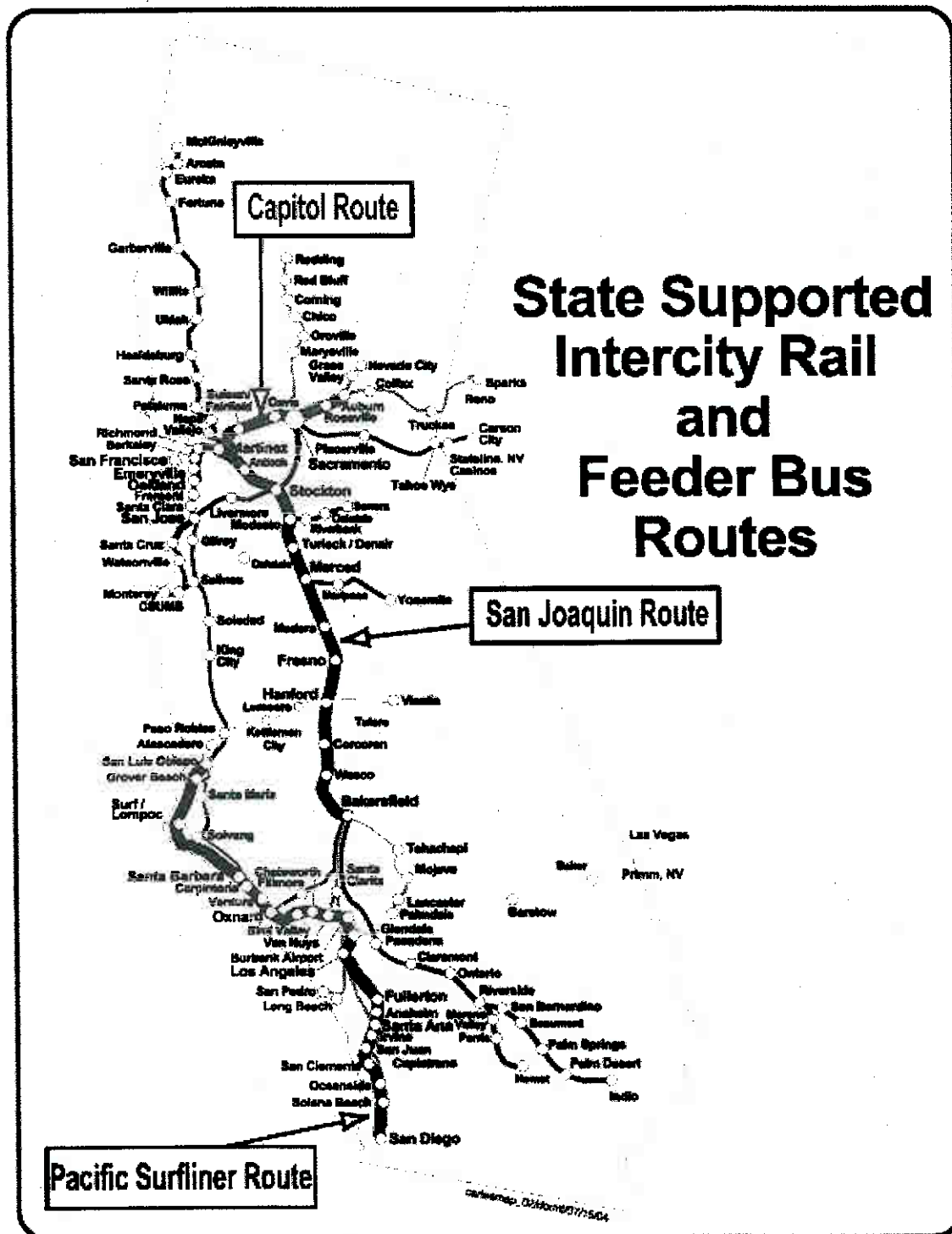


Figure 2

issues. In addition, the rural California experience of Judy Norman, Heather Menninger-Mayedá, and Carol Landsman will be used to obtain and evaluate the current California plans and the planning process with regard to rural intercity transportation. However, also as part of this initial effort the study team will initiate contact with the rural transit providers of California with an initial letter about the project, requesting copies of local or regional plans and surveys and information about their services, and informing them about subsequent tasks in the study and their likely involvement.

In the second task KFH will use the data from the operators, the state, and the carriers to inventory the rural and intercity network. Using ArcGIS, KFH will map all the routes, using the GIS system to delineate providers and designate locations where services connect. This will include the rural provider routes, the Caltrans Amtrak Intercity Rail and Feeder Bus Routes, the Greyhound network (already mapped), and other common carriers or providers as identified. Excel or Filemaker Pro tables will be used to further describe these services in terms of service type, frequency, fares, stops, vehicle type, etc. Using techniques developed and applied in other similar state studies, the KFH team will then utilize Census demographic data on population characteristics associated with transit needs and on overall population to develop a needs ranking of Block Groups for the entire state (data is in Excel, mapping with ArcGIS). Areas ranked as having high need, or high population density are then mapped in relation to the location of the network stops to identify places with high needs or high potential that are within ten miles of stop, 10-25 miles from a stop, or further away (unserved). This process can also be used to evaluate proximity to the existing service for any particular needs group, such as the elderly. The GIS system will also be used to identify the populations of the market area around the stops. Similarly, we will find out the locations of likely key destinations such as military bases, higher education institutions, correctional facilities, major medical facilities. These are mapped in relation to the network, and again identified as to whether or not they are served. These analyses form the basis for determining gaps in service coverage, underserved locations and the potential for improved connections. From this we can identify strategies to address these gaps, and develop potential cost estimates.

KFH and its team members have worked with many states on the S. 5311 program implementation, and particularly on S. 5311(f), and so are well-equipped to focus on the funding availability. KFH performed the project for the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) that led to TCRP Report 79, *Effective Approaches to Meeting Rural Intercity Bus Transportation Needs*. As part of the study, KFH identified all the potential funding sources that have been used by all the states to address rural intercity needs, and we will look to see which of these may be available or useful in California. In addition, we will use the expertise of our California team members to assist in identifying state funding sources.

In the outreach task we are particularly relying on the subconsultants Judy Norman, Heather Menninger-Mayedá, and Carol Landsman to develop, implement and report on the outreach effort with the rural transit operators. They have worked on rural transit and coordination issues in a number of California regions, and have extensive experience in conducting outreach efforts statewide and bring the results of that process back to the overall project.

All of the team members will be involved in the integration of the results of the analysis of the structure and needs, the available funding, and the input from operators and stakeholders at the local level. Tools to be applied include tables, matrices, GIS mapping, and digital photography. All of the team members have experience in developing planning processes and program changes, and are particularly familiar with S. 5311 requirements and issues. The development of program strategies will rely heavily on the long-term, national experience of the KFH Group in performing similar projects and in its national compendium and evaluation of all state efforts. Subconsultant input will be particularly important in developing recommendations to revise California program and planning requirements. The team will combine its efforts in the development of the Action Plan.

The development of the draft final report and presentation materials will utilize the GIS, mapping and graphics capability of KFH Group and its subconsultants to produce both the reports and the Power Point summary presentations. Following review, final products will be developed and provided to Caltrans. In the past we have found that a 25-30 page report, called either an executive summary or the final report, produced in Power Point with attractive graphics, mapping, and photography, can be a major product, with the complete technical report also presented in a more standard text/maps format. We have provided final reports on CD, including multiple products, and will anticipate providing this information so it will be ADA-accessible, and can be placed on the internet by Caltrans.

We believe the proposed team has the skills, background, software, experience, and equipment to provide California with a comprehensive plan that will lead to the development of a sustainable rural intercity network. In the next section we will present our scope of work, schedule and task plan.

# WORK PLAN AND WORK SCHEDULE

## SCOPE OF WORK

### Task 1 - Project Research

Initially, the project team would meet with the Caltrans study team for final agreement on the Work Plan, and to review their perspective on the history and context of intercity and rural-to-urban services in California.

#### Subtask 1.A - S. 5311(f) Review

The study team will conduct a review of the regulatory background of the current Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements and guidance for the S. 5311(f) Rural Intercity Bus Program, and the Caltrans implementation of the S. 5311(f) Rural Intercity Bus Program. Information on federal guidance will be collected and reviewed prior to the initial meeting. We anticipate that this will include Chapter 7 of the FTA Circular 9040.1E *Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program Guidance and Grant Application Instructions*, or its updated version (FTA is updating most circulars following the SAFETEA-LU, and all "Dear Colleague" letters and other guidance. Information on the Caltrans implementation of the program will be collected at the initial meeting with the Caltrans staff, and will include documentation of the history of the program implementation, previous projects involving Greyhound and other private carriers, project descriptions and funding levels, the current program grant application and regulations, other policy guidance, any evaluation or compliance efforts, the consultation process, and the organizational implementation (including staff roles—headquarters and District Offices, and the local/carrier roles). A particular concern during this data collection effort will be any issues that have arisen in the program, including consultation, eligibility, policy/grant requirements, meaningful connections and information/marketing concerns. This subtask will be primarily performed by the Project Manager and KFH Group. The results of this review will be included in the first working paper.

### **Subtask 1.B - Other Federal and State Requirements**

In addition, the study team will review and document other state and federal regulatory requirements that potentially impact rural intercity bus service. This includes Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) requirements regarding registration and insurance requirements (for interstate trips, and for intrastate interlining with Greyhound and other members of the National Bus Traffic Association), California economic regulation of transportation, California implementation of vehicle and driver safety requirements (as they affect public and private operators), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements that apply to public and private operators, air pollution control requirements, etc. This subtask is primarily the responsibility of the KFH Group, and the results will be documented in the initial deliverable.

### **Subtask 1.C - Review Local Plans**

This subtask will involve contact with the transit operators in the state. The study team will review all of the following types of local plans for rural counties and tribal governments:

- Regional Transportation Plans
- Transit Development Plans (Five Year)
- One-Year Transit Surveys
- Short-Range Transit Plans (Three Years)

The goal of the review is to identify 1) current services that could be considered intercity in nature, or a rural feeder to intercity service (given FTA program guidance, 2) planned services in those categories, and 3) identified needs for such services (based on surveys, local public input, etc.), and 4) local goals or objectives regarding regional or intercity connections. This information will be compiled for each county/region/tribal area and documented in the initial research paper.

In order to obtain these documents a three-fold process will be implemented. The study team will obtain copies of as many documents as possible from Caltrans offices during the initial visit. However, we suspect that there may be gaps in the Caltrans collection, or they may be located at District offices, so we also will send a letter to the transit operators requesting copies (or links to the documents, if they are on the web)—at the same time introducing the project and presenting their likely involvement in subsequent steps (additional data collection, interviews, stakeholder outreach). Finally, we will check operator websites and download available documents as a backup to the request for data. Study team members already have some of these reports, and available information will be used. This subtask will involve the Project Manager, but the subconsultants will have a lead role.

In order to address FTA consultation requirements this task will also involve contact with the private carriers providing intercity bus service. They will also be mailed a letter about the

project, and the study team will map their routes and seek information about their plans, issues and identified needs. KFH will take the primary role in this element of the subtask.

#### **Subtask 1.D - California Transportation Plan**

The study team will also obtain the draft 2025 *California Transportation Plan (CTP)* goals and strategies for the long-term, focusing on non-urbanized goals and strategies, including both local transit and related intercity issues. This information will be documented in the initial Working Paper as well, and will be a task of the subconsultants.

#### **Subtask 1.E - California Transportation Investment System (CTIS)**

This statewide planning tool will be reviewed to identify current and planned intercity or inter-regional projects that could affect rural intercity bus network development in the state. This could include rail passenger projects, intermodal terminals, park and ride development or other capital projects in addition to projects directly bearing on rural transit or intercity bus. This subtask will be performed by the subconsultants as well, with data collection also at the initial meeting.

#### **Subtask 1.F - Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP)**

Similarly, the ITSP will be obtained during the initial site visit and reviewed to identify planning for interregional routes, including Focus routes and High Emphasis routes. These will be documented as well in the initial working paper. KFH Group and the subconsultants will jointly address this subtask—the results may need to be incorporated into the GIS files for the project.

##### *Task 1 Deliverables:*

*At the conclusion of this task the study team will produce a Working Paper including the results of each subtask. This will include current program elements, existing intercity/regional bus services (public transit and private operator), state long-term planning strategies and guidance, and planned or proposed projects. KFH Group will perform mapping of routes, services, planned routes, etc. using ArcGIS 9.1—including Focus Routes and High Emphasis routes identified from the ITSP.*

#### **Task 2 - Rural Intercity Bus Needs Assessment**

##### **Subtask 2.A - Structure**

This subtask has many elements that basically involve performing a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the services currently available, including operator type, route

structure, type of service, level of service, connectivity, fare levels, operating costs, information, interlining, etc. We have grouped the sub-elements of this subtask into three subtasks reflecting the major differences in the work activity. Initially the data on the statewide networks will be collected and analyzed. A second subtask involves the analysis of data on rural intercity services provided by regional providers, its use as a basis for defining regions for deeper analysis, surveys of providers in these regions, and then the analysis of the services identified through the survey. Finally, the third subtask involves comparison of this information with the location of populations likely to need service, and the destinations that should be connected to them by this network. This subtask effort will be performed primarily by the KFH Group, with assistance by the subconsultants in the survey of regional providers.

**Subtask 2.A.1: Statewide Networks:** As discussed above, California potentially has four major levels of intercity networks that need to be identified, mapped, and described. These include:

- The state-supported Amtrak/Caltrans Intercity Rail and Feeder Bus route network,
- The private "traditional" common carrier intercity bus network, primarily Greyhound Lines, K-T Services, and Mount Lassen Stages, but also other private carriers,
- The "rural intercity" feeder and route services operated by public transit providers, community services, social services, etc. including services funded with S. 5311(f), and
- Other scheduled airport services from rural areas, including both publicly- and privately-provided services.

KFH Group has public data on the Amtrak rail-bus system, including maps, the *California State Rail Plan 2005-6 to 2015-16*, the *California Passenger Rail System 20-year Improvement Plan Summary Report*, and public schedules. Route coverage will be mapped, including stop locations, and intermodal connections. Tables will be developed to show frequencies, operators, usage, etc. During the initial site visit we will seek to meet with rail program planners to see if there is additional data on ridership and revenues, any market research information, and data on the market areas served by the rail feeder bus routes.

As seen above, KFH Group has already put the common carrier route network into ArcGIS, though additional services may yet be identified, and the individual stops all need to be coded. We have the common carrier schedules provided by Greyhound, and through the industry timetable, *Russell's Guide*. Tables can be used to depict frequencies and typical fare levels. Part of this analysis includes identification of services to commercial airports, and to passenger ferry terminals.

**Subtask 2.A.2: Regional Providers:** However, the analysis of intercity services provided by public entities, community and social services, and other private intercity services is more complicated. Few if any of these services are listed in *Russell's Guide* or the Greyhound information system. For this step, we will use the inventory of rural intercity services identified from the survey of rural transit operators and the review of their plans conducted in Task 1. C.

When that information is collected it will include information on the type of service provided, typical costing methodologies (and levels), user groups, etc. Based on that data, we will develop criteria for selecting four geographic regions for the in-depth analysis called for in this subtask. The regions will be selected to be representative of the different geographic regions of the state, to reflect travel patterns identified in previous plans and in mapping of the rail-bus and common carrier networks, etc. These regions will be defined and submitted to the Caltrans Project Manager for concurrence.

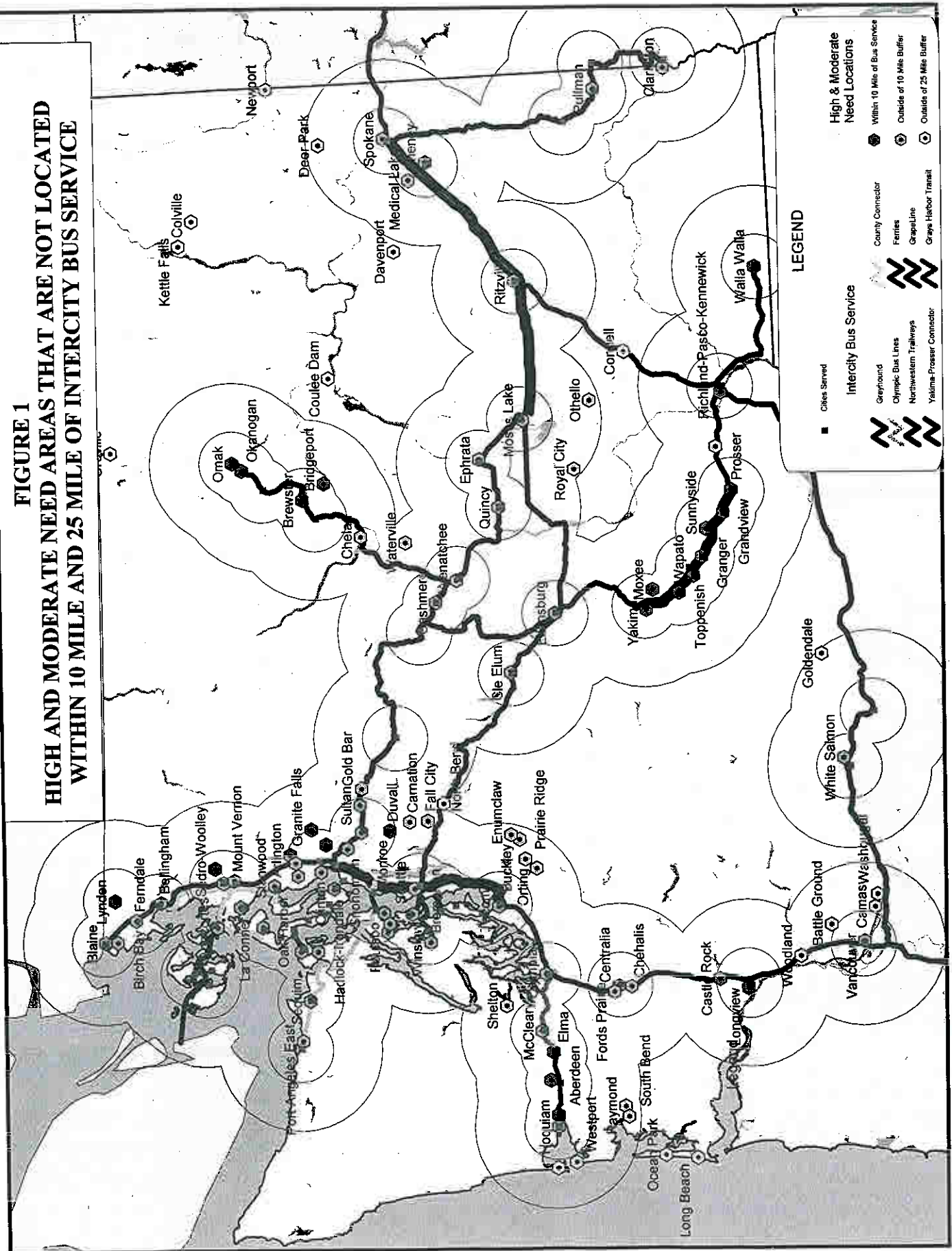
Once defined, we will perform a more detailed survey of the rural intercity service in each region by directly contacting the transit providers previously identified. From them we will collect additional data on these services, including costs, ridership, revenue, connectivity, marketing/information, etc. This information will be mapped and entered into summary tables and analyzed in text. The information collected in this second wave of more detailed surveys will be used in this task, and also serve to provide materials to serve as the focus of the stakeholder outreach meetings in Task 3.

As indicated above these networks will be identified, mapped, and described in tables and text. The mapping of the services will identify intercity rural routes in terms of local, type of service, frequency, and connectivity with the trunk networks operated by Amtrak and Greyhound (or connections to regional commuter services). The overall route structure, including all types of services, will then be combined with mapping of demographic needs and potential destinations in the next step, the final element of this subtask.

**Subtask 2.A.3: Structure Analysis.** Finally, a needs assessment model will be developed based on demographic and auto availability data to show the relative level of potential need for intercity transit statewide. This is a task that the study team has performed in many states, using a relative ranking process that includes overall population, population density, seniors, young adults, households with no vehicle available, persons with mobility limitations and persons with low income as factors to identify areas of relative need. We will review the data categories to be used in this analysis with the Caltrans Project Manager, revising them if need be. Typically we perform the ranking statewide, at the Census Block Group level. Locations in rural areas with Block Groups showing a High or Moderate Need (top third or middle third) are then identified and mapped, and the locations compared to the service areas of the stops identified in the intercity and feeder mapping. Figure 1 presents an example of a map prepared by KFH showing the results of this process in Washington State. Local transit service areas can also be added to address feeder connectivity, along with rail and other modes (commercial air). A separate analysis is the simple comparison of population densities with the network. We would look at the overall populations and relative rankings of areas needed service to determine thresholds for potential future service.

As part of this effort we will use available information from carriers, public data, and anecdotes to link demographic characteristics with trip types and destinations. For example, young adults 18-24 likely are making trips associated with higher education institutions, military bases, or correctional institutions. Seniors may be connecting to regional medical centers or

**FIGURE 1**  
**HIGH AND MODERATE NEED AREAS THAT ARE NOT LOCATED**  
**WITHIN 10 MILE AND 25 MILE OF INTERCITY BUS SERVICE**



regional transportation hubs (airports or train stations). The information defining the relationship between demographic characteristics and trip types may have to be developed from national data (for example the USDOT National Household Travel Survey or Greyhound market research).

Also as part of this effort in previous studies we have mapped the location of all hospitals, major airports, correctional institutions, higher education facilities, and military bases. Data on the relative size is collected (number of beds, number of students) to give some idea of the relative merit of providing service to these locations. These are mapped in GIS on a map that also shows intercity service areas to find those that are not served at all, or served only at a distance. Figure 2 presents an example of such a map we prepared for Washington State as part of our recent study. Other locations such as major shopping areas, defined regional centers, or major employment centers could also be identified and mapped. Gaps in service to neighboring states will also be identified, based on location of key services across the border and on examination of state Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) maps to show key gateways.

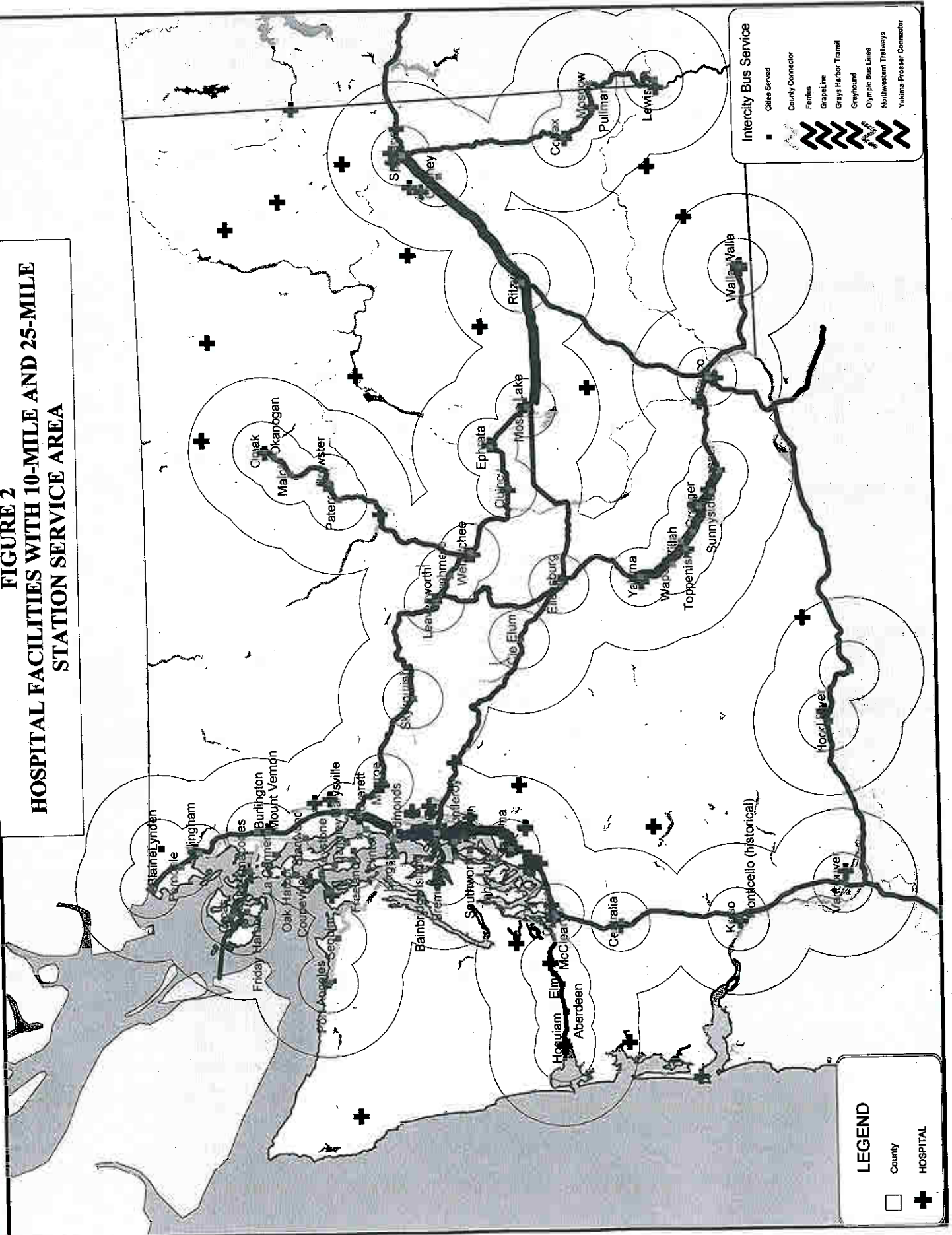
In addition to proximity, consideration of gaps in service will need to consider connectivity and the level and type of service to evaluate the relative degree of service coverage—whether an area with some service is underserved. This evaluation has to be made in consideration of the likely demand, and the degree to which the private market (unsubsidized services) or funded services is the provider (or could be the provider).

Finally, the end of this subtask will involve the identification of the key gaps in services based on the analysis of the data, including both intrastate services and interstate connections. These rural intercity service gaps will be prioritized in terms of the affected populations and trip types, based on the analysis of existing service, policy and planning information (from Task 1), and survey data (from subtask 2.A.2), and the service needs data. We anticipate that the outreach activity in Task 3 will focus on these identified gaps and the priorities developed in this task, providing additional qualitative data leading to revisions in the final plan document. If possible, gaps or needs will be identified in terms of generic project types needed to address the gap—additional routes, additional hours or miles, intermodal facilities, vehicles for replacement or expansion, etc so that funding needs can be estimated in the next task.

### **Subtask 2.B - Funding**

**Subtask 2.B.1: Identify Sources of Funding:** The KFH Group Team will identify potential sources of federal, state and local funding to address identified rural intercity network gaps. This will include the FTA S. 5211(f) rural intercity funding, other FTA programs (particularly potential for funding facilities or vehicle capital), state transit funding that could be used on its own or to match FTA funds, and other program funds. In our previous work on TCRP 79 we identified a wide variety of funding sources that had been used for rural intercity related projects, though in many cases there was only a single project or two that had been able to access such funding—often for the development of a facility project. To the extent that other federal or sources are available they will be identified. In the past private carriers have provided local match funding as well, particularly Greyhound, and current carrier policy will be

**FIGURE 2**  
**HOSPITAL FACILITIES WITH 10-MILE AND 25-MILE**  
**STATION SERVICE AREA**



determined and included in this subtask. The results will be provided in Excel spreadsheet format, with descriptive text. KFH Group will focus on national funding availability, and the subconsultants will focus on state funding options.

**Subtask 2.B.2: S. 5311(f) Funding:** FTA has provided projected S. 5311/5340 state funding allocations through FY 2009, and that data provides a basis for projecting the availability of this funding for ongoing support of the program, assuming that the entire 15 percent is potentially available. This information will be added to the spreadsheet. Because the funding can be used for a number of different purposes with differing match ratios, the ability of the funding to address the gaps will vary depending on whether the need is additional service miles or hours, or capital for vehicles and facilities. The gap analysis in the previous subtask will be applied to project funding requirements, and the adequacy of S. 5311(f).

**Subtask 2.B.3: Funding Analysis:** The results of the two previous subtasks will be combined in a synthesis document and Excel spreadsheet, and an assessment provided on the possible use of these funding sources as a sustainable source for developing and maintaining a rural intercity network. We will use the results of the previous subtask as a basis for estimating the costs of addressing the needs or gaps identified. The costs will then be compared to the potentially available funding to determine possible strategies for ongoing funding. The RFP calls for a cost/benefit analysis on the possibility of using different funding sources—a formal cost-benefit may not be possible, but based on experience elsewhere it may be possible to consider the cost-effectiveness in terms of likely costs per boarding of different service types (perhaps by assuming that policy will impose caps), and discussing the opportunity costs of using funding sources that are also potentially available for other purposes. In past studies we have addressed the trade-off between using rural funding for intercity versus local trips by comparing the relative subsidy per passenger-mile—depending on Caltrans needs this issue will be addressed in this subtask.

Based on the estimated cost to address the needs, and the potential funding sources, we will identify funding strategies that could be used to address the needs or gaps, including the use of S. 5311(f) and associated state or local match funding—but also addressing other sources if appropriate.

#### **Task 2 Deliverables**

*At the conclusion of Task 2 the study team will provide a Working Paper documenting the inventory of services, the analysis of needs, service gaps or needs, cost estimates to address these gaps and needs, all potential funding sources by category or program, and a funding strategy matching likely funding (including S. 5311(f) funding allocations) with the estimated cost of addressing rural intercity needs. The Working Paper will include Word text, ArcGIS maps, Excel data tables, and a summary document will also be provided in FileMaker Pro format for state use.*

### Task 3 - On-Site Interviews and Public Participation Outreach Workshops

Following Task 1 and as part of Subtask 2.A.2, project team members will work with Caltrans to identify the most appropriate geographic regions within the State of California in which to conduct the proposed stakeholder outreach effort. Members of the project team have worked with Caltrans on previous transit-related study efforts and have worked with transit properties statewide. Our understanding of regional nuances and geographic differences will be beneficial in helping to select the four target areas offering the greatest opportunity for accomplishing the study objectives.

The project team proposes to utilize inclusive outreach and data collection techniques that will provide opportunities to not only to validate and understand previously collected quantitative data, but to gain qualitative insight into the perspectives of identified stakeholders. We understand the challenges of working with a diversity of constituencies. Therefore, we will work to ensure that our proposed outreach effort reaches the greatest number of stakeholder agencies and organizations, community-based organizations, and public transit agencies in each of the four target geographic areas.

Recognizing that the outreach effort is expected to yield verification of quantitative data previously provided in the surveys conducted in Task 1, as well as, qualitative information, the project team will conduct on-site interviews with rural transit providers and regional workshops with interested regional and community stakeholders in the target areas.

The interviews to be conducted with rural transit providers are a logical follow-up to the surveys conducted in Task 2. The interviews will be conducted to corroborate service, trip and consumer-related information previously provided by transit providers on the survey.

Within each of the four target areas, we will organize and conduct as appropriate, operator meetings to include both public and providers, to discuss the results of the survey, and to obtain their perspective on issues related to operation of intercity services which could include, but are not limited to:

- Service gaps and unmet needs
- Current and future plans for implementation of intercity services
- Barriers to implementation and continuation of services
- Potential for coordination of services
- Status of projects receiving FTA 5311 funding in the target areas

We propose to conduct one transit provider group meeting within each of the four identified target areas. This type of group meeting provides the project team with the best opportunity to complete our data and information collection efforts, but also offers transit providers the opportunity to become familiar with the intercity bus service plans and programs of other operators within their region. This type of forum could also in some cases serve as a starting point to introduce ideas for potential intercity service coordination.

In addition to the transit provider group meetings, we propose to conduct at least two additional local stakeholder workshops in each of the four areas. Working with the transit operators, the project team will identify and meet with interested stakeholders from the community, which could include community leaders, representatives from community-based service organizations, homeowner groups, etc. The workshops will be designed to discuss areas of potential need for services relative to the information collected from transit operators during Task 2. The project team will work with the local transit operators to schedule and conduct the workshops. Whenever possible time permitting, we will work to meet with existing community-based groups during their regularly scheduled meetings.

The results of this task will include a summary of the results of the interviews and the stakeholder sessions. Appendix \_\_ presents an example of an outreach summary prepared by the subconsultants for another project addressing rural transportation needs for medical transportation. Another product will be a report on the rural intercity services provided in these regions, by corridor, presented as an Excel spreadsheet. Also, we will summarize (in Excel) potential S. 5311(f) funding strategies identified during this process.

KFH staff will participate in the identification of the regions, development of materials for use in the outreach interviews and meetings, development of "scripts" or agendas and presentation materials, and in the incorporation of the results. The primary responsibility for organizing and conducting this outreach effort will be that of the subconsultants.

**Task 3: Deliverables:**

*Documentation and analysis of interviews conducted with rural transit providers in each of the target areas; Incorporation of new data and information into the inventory of rural intercity services begun in Task 2; Documentation of the results of stakeholder workshops; documentation of funding strategies by target area.*

**Task 4 - Integration of Study Results into Departmental, Local and Regional Planning Practices as an Action Plan**

This task is the shift from analysis to implementation. It will be primarily led by KFH, with assistance from the subconsultants addressing California planning requirements. Based on the findings of the previous research and input, the study team will undertake the following subtasks:

#### **Subtask 4.A. - Methodologies and Standard Policy**

In order to achieve consistent, ongoing implementation of proposed projects, and projects that have not yet been identified but which address the policy goals, it will be necessary to provide a planning framework for MPO/RTPA planning to include intercity and rural-to-urban planning in the ongoing process of transportation planning. This could include materials with the policies, goals and objectives, analysis tools, thresholds (population, activity center locations, bus service levels, etc.), diagnostic matrices that lead to identification of possible responses, etc.—a set of planning and analysis tools. The study team has developed or suggested tools in TCRP 79, and has been involved in developing planning process scopes for Oregon, and is in the process of developing policy elements to include rural intercity planning as an integral part of the transportation planning process in Washington. We will endeavor to develop tools that are useful for ongoing implementation in the California context. It should be noted that this approach is as much needed to allow local planners to reject ineffective or unwarranted project proposals as to encourage the development of supportive projects that offer useful intercity connections to rural Californians.

#### **Subtask 4.B - Goals, Objectives, Policies, Measures, and Strategies**

Focusing on goals and objectives first, we would work with Caltrans to determine the goals for rural intercity services, following that with objectives. Based on the objectives we would define measures to be used in assessing the degree to which objectives are addressed or met. Definitions of terms will be a key element, as these policies will need to define "rural intercity" and more definitively, and will likely need to define such things as the "travel shed" and "connectivity". The background data collected and analyzed in previous tasks will guide this effort, and it will need to mesh with other state policy guidelines analyzed in Task 1.

A number of states involved in funding rural intercity programs have had issues regarding the development of performance measures and requirements, in part because intercity projects often have very different characteristics when compared to local transit. There are few boardings per mile, higher fares, much longer trips, often a different basis for costing (per bus-mile, rather than per-hour or line items). All of these must be considered in the development of program guidelines and performance measures—typically there is a need for separate measures and requirements for the intercity part of the rural program.

Earlier work by the KFH Group Team for the TCRP and USDOT included an inventory and assessment of virtually all the strategies that have been tried around the country, and the general outcome was that a combination of strategies may be most effective. These could involve operating funding to maintain or improve existing service, information systems (ranging from trailblazer highway signs to statewide web sites and 511 telephone information) to let the public know that the network exists, new vehicle capital to reduce costs and improve accessibility, interline ticketing, intermodal facilities to allow physical connections, along with marketing and community outreach.

Taken as statewide strategies, some of these are state-level tasks (information systems, 511 implementation), while others are implemented at the carrier or local level even though called for and funded by the state. KFH Group has worked with a number of states over the years developing program strategies that are appropriate to the needs, opportunities and resources of that state. In Michigan Mr. Fravel revised the program to offer operating assistance only in the more rural parts of the state, and to focus intermodal terminal construction in areas with significant ridership. In Georgia he developed a program to provide vehicle capital, because of the lack of state operating assistance. In Nebraska he developed a program using non-profit pass-through organizations, because the state cannot directly fund a private for-profit. In California we will base the development of strategies on the needs and gaps identified, on the program capabilities, and on the likely resources.

A question that we will raise with California concerns the basic strategy of the state program. Most state-managed transit programs offer funding to eligible parties, and it is up to local applicants to develop projects to meet local needs. These projects are in competition for the available funding. This works well for local projects, but it may not be the most effective way to develop a statewide rural and intercity network—if no one in a key area sees fit to apply for the funding there may be gaps in routes or connections, or if they develop a project that does not connect with the other providers the overall network may suffer. If there is an identified network with a number of gaps or needs, which can be defined as projects, is there a way in which the state could be proactive in finding applicants (or contractors) to perform those specific services? This is essentially the approach taken by the rail program in its development of a bus feeder network—Caltrans pays Amtrak to contract with bus operators who run on routes and schedules determined by the state rail program, to make guaranteed connections. Program requirements may necessitate some version of the current application and funding process, but we will seek to develop program strategies that could result in an identified statewide network that could be accessed by anyone to connect to or from rural California—rather than a number of unconnected individual projects.

#### **Subtask 4.C - S. 5311(f) Program Strategy**

In this subtask the program strategies and actions developed in the previous subtask will be used as the basis for developing the ongoing California S. 5311(f) program. Based on the SAFETEA-LU authorizations and California's estimated apportionments, we will develop an ongoing program strategy to provide for continued funding for the rural intercity program. When the S. 5311(f) allocations were lower a number of states were hesitant to use the program for anything other than seed funding (projects would have to become self-sustaining within a certain period) or one-time capital projects, for fear that money would not be available at some future point to deal with impending crises.

Higher funding levels make it possible to consider ongoing "maintenance" projects—routes or services that may always require operating assistance (in the same way as local transit and rail passenger services). This is particularly true if the program guidance includes performance measures to eliminate projects if they fall below performance requirements over

some prescribed period. This would allow capacity for new projects over time. We will link the strategies and projects with the available funding in a sustainable program based on the California S. 5311(f) allocation levels.

#### **Subtask 4.D - Follow-Up Strategies—Application Review Criteria**

Part of the strategy for this program will involve development of criteria for use in the planning process to support the implementation of sound rural intercity projects that address the identified needs or gaps. Local and regional planning processes typically have a local service perspective, so this may require adding sections for this different type of service, and new criteria related to this type of service. Oregon provides examples of ways in which inclusion of intercity project planning criteria in local or regional transportation planning can support the development of statewide rural intercity transit services—amplifying the impact of state transit planners.

Another aspect of this task is the review of the current project application process, with recommendations regarding any needed changes in project review criteria. Currently the S. 5311(f) program has a separate application, so projects compete in their own “rural intercity” funding pool. One option is to award extra points in the review process for projects that directly address gaps or needs identified in the plan. Another would be to include criteria that would address desired features, such as connections at intermodal centers, participation by a rural carrier as a bus commission agent, interline ticketing, inclusion in the Greyhound web and telephone information systems, etc.

To the extent that Caltrans is asking RTPAs and MPOs to incorporate policy changes and criteria in their processes, it will need to have a follow-up process to ensure that they have been incorporated. Aside from follow-up contacts with these agencies by the transit program, they could be incorporated in guidance from the Caltrans planning division, and reflected in the rural intercity bus transit program application as requirements or incentives. The KFH team will work with Caltrans to identify and document these follow-up strategies.

#### **Subtask 4.E - Action Plan**

This subtask involves compiling the results of the previous four subtasks into a single document that is presented as an Action Plan to improve rural intercity bus service statewide. It would serve as a policy statement, identifying changes needed at the state and local/regional level to incorporate rural intercity needs into the overall transportation planning process. It would also include a funding strategy

***Task 4 Deliverables***

*The main deliverable from Task 4 will be a draft Action Plan document incorporating the results of all the subtask.*

**Task 5 - Findings and Recommendations, Draft Report, and Presentation Materials**

**Subtask 5.A - Draft Report**

With Caltrans staff input on the proposed outline, a draft final report documenting the findings, analysis, goals, policies, objectives, projects of the entire project will be prepared. We suggest actually three documents—a three page Executive Summary (almost a brochure), a 25-30 page draft Final Report focusing on the key analyses, policy implications, and proposed projects; and a longer technical report with limited potential distribution. These draft reports will be provided for review and comment. They will be provided in a format that is ADA-accessible. A Power Point presentation version of the Final Report will also be developed and presented at a designated meeting with Caltrans and invited participants.

**Subtask 5.B - Presentation Materials**

In addition to the draft final report, the study team will provide Caltrans with presentation materials, including ArcGIS mapping, a Power Point presentation, and any charts or graphs that are need to enable Caltrans to present the proposed program and facilitate their analysis of the rural intercity bus services and needs in the state.

***Task 5 Deliverables***

*Task 5 products will include the draft final report document, a Power Point presentation, and other presentation materials as described.*

## Task 6 - Final Report

The study team will produce a final report entitled "*California Statewide Rural Intercity Bus Study*" incorporating revisions and comments on the draft report. The Final Report will include all the topics outlined in the RFP, plus any additional issues or topics identified during the course of the study. A PDF version of the Executive Summary and Report will be provided, along with a Power Point presentation, and a CD with the PDF and text-only versions of all documents. ArcGIS, Excel and Filemaker Pro files with data and charts will be provided to Caltrans.

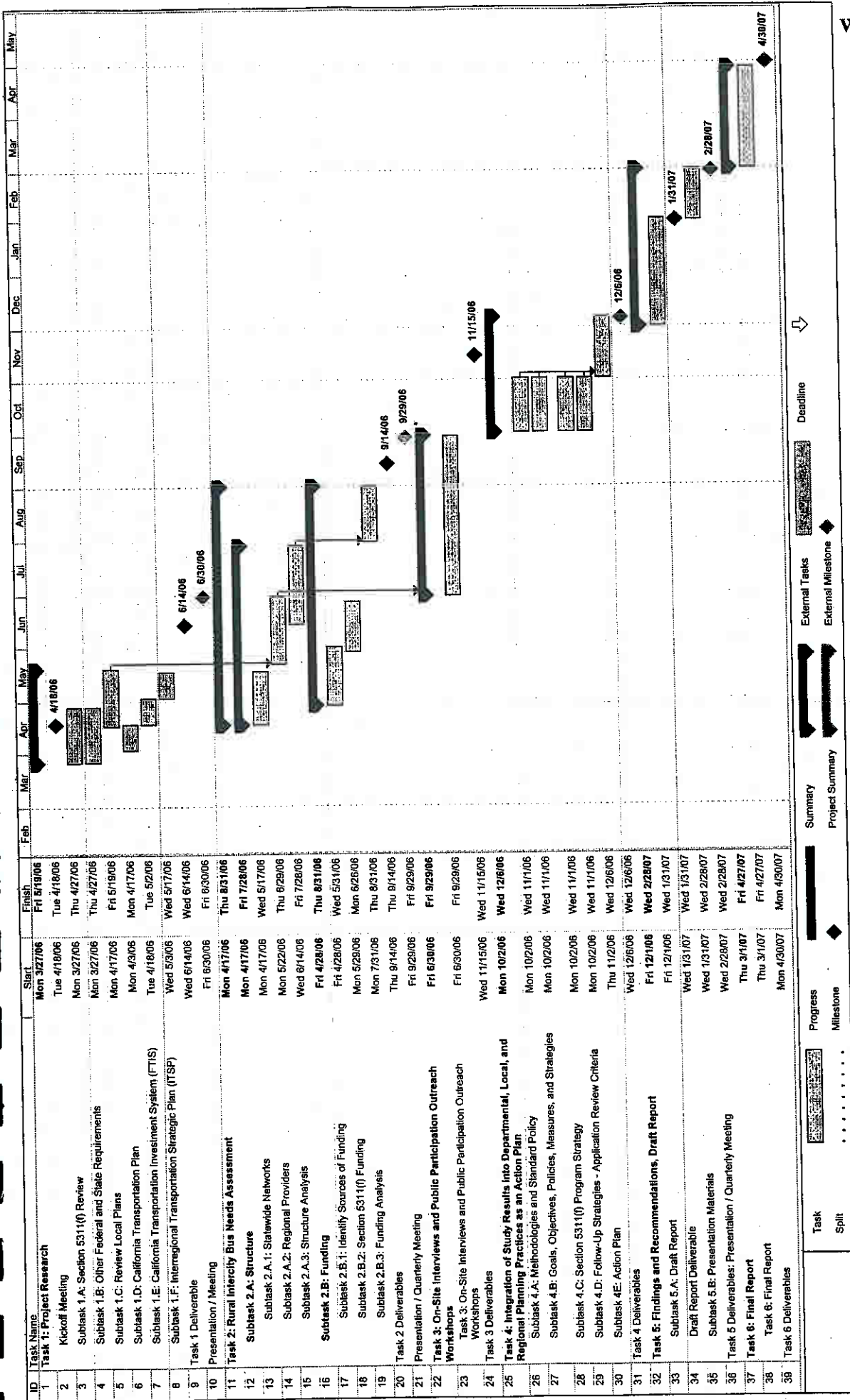
### *Task 6 Deliverables:*

*At the conclusion of Task 6 the study team will provide Caltrans with the Final Report, document and files, reflecting any comments or input on the draft final report and presentation materials. The deliverables will include a CD with the report, in an accessible "text only" version, in Word, Excel and Filemaker Pro files, and as PDF files.*

## PROJECT SCHEDULE AND WORK PLAN

Table 1 presents the work elements and schedule for the project, based on the tasks presented above. It was prepared using Microsoft Project Manager software, and so can be modified or updated through the course of the project. Key deliverables are shown as milestones, and Caltrans required briefings/presentations and deliverable due dates are shown as external milestones. There are several linkages in the process, primarily regarding the Task 1 collection of planning documents and service data from the local rural transit providers, which must be completed to allow the Task 2 inventory of their services, required before the Task 2A structure analysis can be completed. The actual on-site interviews and stakeholder outreach of Task 3 is then scheduled to follow the Task 2 assessment, as the Task 2 data is needed to define the regions for the on-site activities.

Figure 3 presents the primary staff involvement in the different tasks. Hours by task by person are presented in the **Personnel** section (page 2).



Summary  
 Project Summary

Task  
 Split

Progress  
 Milestone

External Tasks  
 External Milestone

Deadline

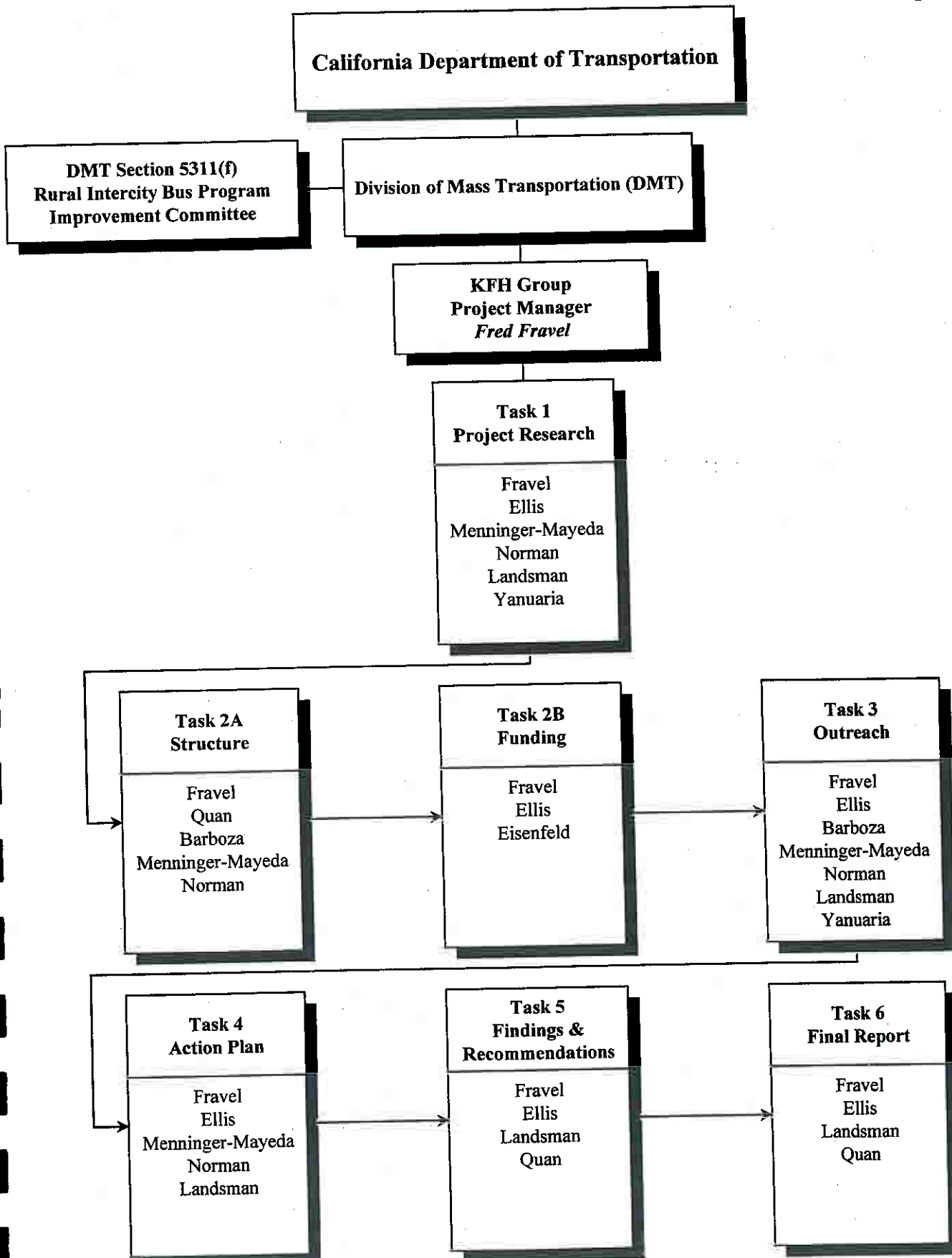


Figure 3 – Staffing By Task